

EXPLANATION OF H.J. RES. 27
WITHDRAWING THE APPROVAL OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE
AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

Present Law

Sections 124-125 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) (P.L. 103-465) require the President to submit a special report on U.S. participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO) every five years from the date the U.S. first joined the WTO. Congress received the first of these five-year reports on March 2, 2000 and the second report on March 1, 2005.

Following receipt of the report, any Member of either House of Congress can introduce a joint resolution to withdraw Congressional approval of the WTO agreement. Congress then has 90 session days from receipt of the report to act on the joint resolution. The resolution is privileged and cannot be amended. Additionally, the Committee on Ways and Means has 45 session days after introduction of the resolution within which to act on it or be automatically discharged.

If the resolution is passed and vetoed by the President, each House can vote to override the veto before the end of the 90-day period or within 15 days from the date on which Congress receives the President's veto message, whichever is later.

Explanation of the Resolution

H.J. Res. 27, a joint resolution which would withdraw approval of the United States from the agreement establishing the WTO, was introduced March 2, 2005, by Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-VT).